



CENTRE FOR INNOVATION

WISHFORD CENTRE FOR INNOVATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2025-26

A year of innovation in education

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Wishford Centre for Innovation was established in September 2025 to help Wishford Education think creatively, strategically and responsibly about the future of education. Its first year has been one of rapid development: building new tools, launching new publications, convening national conversations and supporting staff across the group as they respond to the opportunities and challenges of artificial intelligence.

The Centre exists to ensure that innovation in education remains grounded in the things that matter most: excellent teaching, strong relationships, human flourishing and improved outcomes for pupils. It is not a technology initiative for its own sake. Rather, it is a practical and strategic response to a changing educational landscape, in which schools must prepare young people for a future shaped by artificial intelligence, automation, creativity, emotional intelligence and lifelong learning.

Over the course of its first year, the Centre has established a visible presence both within Wishford Education and across the wider sector. The inaugural **AI x EI Conference** brought together educators, thinkers and leaders to explore the relationship between artificial intelligence and emotional intelligence. The first edition of the **Wishford Journal of Innovation in Education** created a new platform for serious, reflective writing on the future of education. A suite of **software tools** has also been developed to support pupils, teachers and school leaders, including Sophia, Ample, Repetita and the Prompt Directory.

Alongside these projects, the Centre has delivered training and INSET across the Wishford group, contributed to national discussions on AI in education, supported research collaborations and begun to build a professional network through online networks, conferences and sector partnerships.

This report summarises the work of the Centre in its first year, celebrates the achievements so far, and sets out an ambitious vision for the year ahead.

THE CENTRE FOR INNOVATION

The Wishford Centre for Innovation is part of Wishford Education. Its purpose is to explore, develop and share thoughtful approaches to innovation in schools, with a particular focus on artificial intelligence, digital tools, assessment, feedback, staff development and the future of learning.

The Centre has been created at a moment of significant educational change. Artificial intelligence is already beginning to reshape how knowledge is accessed, how feedback is generated, how administrative work is completed and how pupils can be supported. At the same time, these changes make the human dimensions of education more important than ever: creativity, communication, character, confidence, judgement, collaboration and emotional intelligence.

The Centre's work therefore sits at the intersection of technology and humanity. Its focus is not simply on adopting new tools, but on asking better questions:

- How can technology improve learning outcomes?
- How can teachers be supported rather than displaced?
- How can pupils use AI ethically, thoughtfully and effectively?
- How can schools retain their distinctive human character in an increasingly automated world?
- How can Wishford Education become a recognised leader in practical, values-led innovation?

In its first year, the Centre has begun to answer these questions through events, publications, software development, staff training, research and collaboration.

A YEAR IN HIGHLIGHTS

The first year of the Wishford Centre for Innovation has included a wide range of projects and achievements. These include:

The launch of the AI x EI Conference, bringing together educators and thought leaders to explore the relationship between artificial intelligence and emotional intelligence.

The publication of the first Wishford Journal of Innovation in Education, establishing a serious platform for reflection, research and sector debate.

The development of several software tools, designed to support teaching, learning, feedback, revision, timetabling, staff development and school operations.

The delivery of AI and innovation-focused INSET sessions across Wishford schools, supporting staff confidence and practical understanding.

The creation of strategy and vision documents, helping schools and leaders think coherently about the implications of AI over the next five to ten years.

Growing external recognition, including Wishford being mentioned in the Independent Schools Council's submission to the Department for Education as an example of positive AI use in education.

Involvement in national and international conversations, including conference appearances, research collaborations, podcast invitations and interviews with a number of postgraduate students.

Together, these achievements have helped to establish the Centre as a visible and credible voice in educational innovation.

AI x EI CONFERENCE

One of the flagship achievements of the Centre's first year was the creation and delivery of the AI x EI Conference.

The conference was built around a central idea: as artificial intelligence becomes more powerful, emotional intelligence becomes increasingly important. Schools must therefore prepare pupils for a future in which they can use technology effectively while also developing the human qualities that cannot be automated: empathy, creativity, courage, teamwork, adaptability, ethical judgement and leadership.

The conference brought together speakers, delegates and educational leaders to consider how schools can respond positively to rapid technological change. It created space for practical discussion, strategic reflection and professional connection. Rather than presenting AI as a purely technical issue, the conference framed it as a profound educational and human question.

The event also helped to establish the Wishford Centre for Innovation as a convening force within the sector. It demonstrated that Wishford Education is not merely responding to change, but actively shaping the conversation around the future of education.

The success of the conference has created a strong foundation for future events, partnerships and publications. Planning for AI x EI 2027 will build on this momentum, with the aim of making the event an important annual fixture in the education calendar.



JOURNAL OF INNOVATION

The first edition of the **Wishford Journal of Innovation in Education** was published as part of the Centre's wider mission to encourage thoughtful, informed and ambitious discussion about the future of education.

The Journal provides a platform for educators, researchers, school leaders and thinkers to explore the opportunities and challenges facing education. Its first edition focused on questions surrounding artificial intelligence, the future of learning and the balance between technological progress and human flourishing.

Publishing the Journal has helped the Centre to move beyond short-term commentary and into a more substantial form of thought leadership. It gives Wishford Education a distinctive voice in the sector and creates an opportunity to bring together a range of perspectives on innovation in schools.

The Journal also complements the Centre's wider work. It provides intellectual depth to the practical software tools being developed, the training being delivered and the events being organised. It shows that innovation is not only about rapid experimentation, but also about careful reflection.

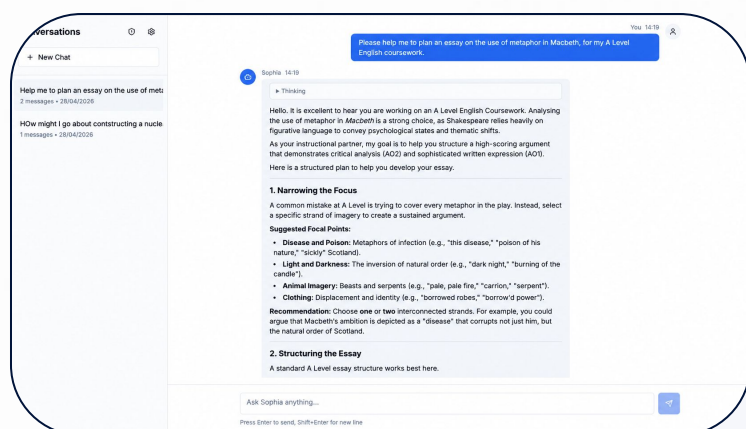
A second edition is planned for **October 2026**, with the opportunity to broaden contributions and continue building the Journal's reputation as a serious publication on the future of education.



SOFTWARE TOOLS

A major strand of the Centre's work has been the development of practical software tools to support pupils, teachers and school leaders. These tools are designed to address real educational needs, while also exploring how artificial intelligence and digital systems can improve learning, efficiency and decision-making.

SOPHIA



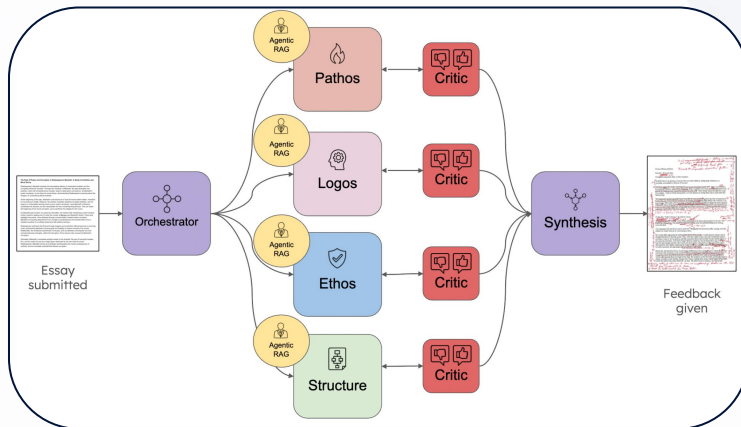
Sophia is being developed as a **personal assistant and study partner** for pupils and staff. The aim is to provide each user with intelligent, age-appropriate support that can help with organisation, reflection, study skills and learning.

This year, the work on Sophia has focused particularly on safeguarding, prompt-injection prevention, Socratic

dialogue and metacognition. These priorities reflect the Centre's wider approach to AI: tools must be useful, but they must also be safe, thoughtful and educationally grounded.

Sophia is not simply a chatbot. The longer-term vision is to create a genuinely useful educational assistant that can support pupils' independence while encouraging reflection, critical thinking and responsible AI use.

AMPLE



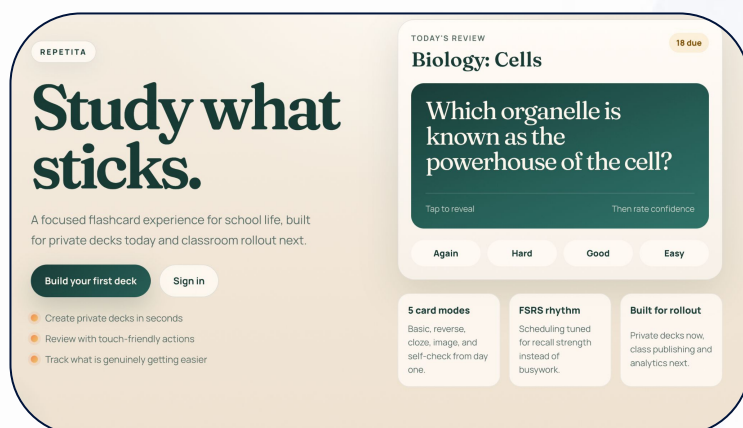
Ample is a **multi-agent feedback tool** designed to provide detailed feedback on A-Level English essays. It is based on Aristotle's concepts of Pathos, Logos and Ethos, combined with assessment objectives, mark schemes and agentic retrieval-augmented generation.

The tool explores how AI can support richer, more structured feedback

while preserving the role of the teacher. Rather than providing a single generic response, Ample uses multiple agents to examine an essay from different perspectives before synthesising feedback.

This work has particular significance in relation to assessment and feedback, both of which are likely to be transformed by AI over the coming years. Ample offers a practical example of how schools might use AI to improve feedback quality, consistency and depth.

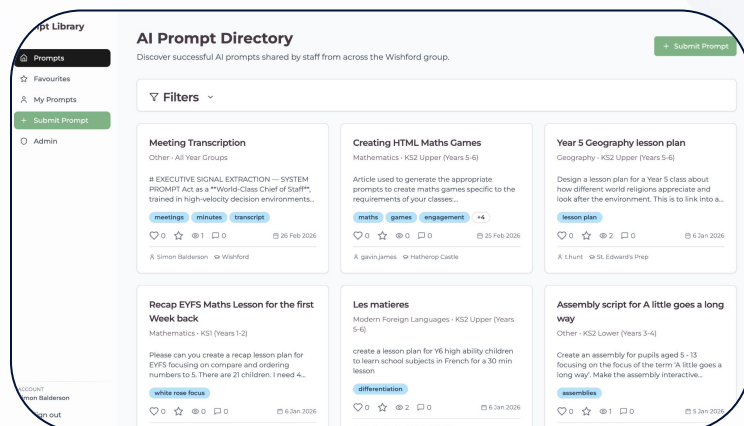
REPETITA



Repetita is a **spaced-repetition tool** designed to help pupils remember more of what they learn. It builds on evidence-informed approaches to memory, retrieval practice and revision. Pupils are able to build their own decks, as well as giving staff the ability to build and deploy decks to their classes.

The aim is to support pupils in developing stronger long-term retention, while helping teachers create and manage effective revision materials. Over time, Repetita will also integrate with other tools, such as Sophia, allowing lesson content, vocabulary lists or revision topics to be easily converted into personalised study decks.

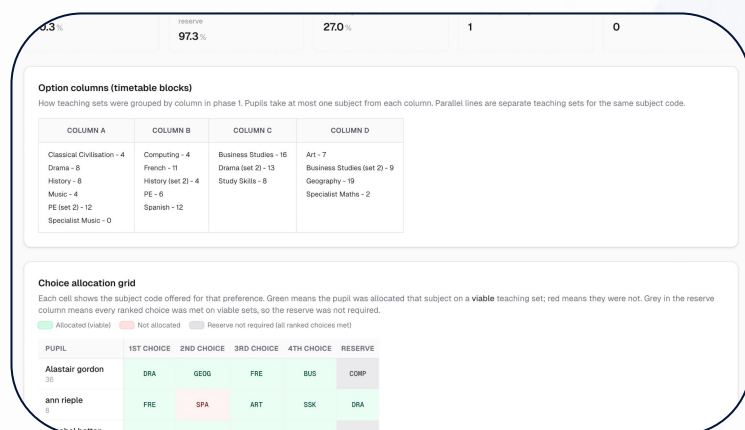
PROMPT DIRECTORY



The Prompt Directory is a **shared repository of effective AI prompts** for teachers and staff. It is designed to help colleagues move beyond isolated experimentation and towards a more collaborative, evidence-informed use of AI.

Teachers can use the directory to find, adapt and share prompts for lesson planning, feedback, resource creation, administration and professional reflection. Having been well-received at group level, our aim is to open the Prompt Directory to collaboration with other schools, helping to build a wider community of practice.

OPTION COLUMNS



The Option Columns tool has been developed to support schools with the complex process of **organising subject choices and timetable structures**.

Option-blocking is a difficult logistical challenge, particularly when schools need to balance pupil preferences, staffing, rooming, class sizes and curriculum priorities. The tool

explores how optimisation techniques can support better decisions and reduce manual workload, at a far greater speed than current established tools.. Users are able to ‘chat’ with an AI interface, with prompts such as “what if Biology was split across two columns?”, rather than having to navigate a complex set of options and settings.

This is an example of innovation focused not directly on classroom AI, but on the operational systems that allow schools to run more effectively.

VISION FOR 2026-27

The next stage for the Wishford Centre for Innovation is to move from promising beginnings, to sustained sector-wide impact: helping schools prepare young people for a rapidly changing world, while remaining rooted in educational purpose.

**01**

SCALE PRACTICAL INNOVATION

Extend pilots, tools and training across more schools and teams.

**02**

BUILD EVIDENCE

Measure the impact of innovation on quality, workload, outcomes and culture.

**03**

GROW THE PLATFORM

Develop the Centre further as a hub for events, publication, research and professional dialogue.

**04**

SUPPORT FUTURE READINESS

Help staff and pupils navigate AI, creativity, emotional intelligence and the changing shape of education

FUTURE PLANS

The first year of the Wishford Centre for Innovation has created strong foundations. The next phase will focus on implementation, collaboration and wider influence.

Key priorities for the year ahead include:

Building a Community

The AI x EI Conference created a strong network of educators, speakers and potential partners. The next step is to turn these connections into collaborations, publications, research projects and future events.

Opening the Prompt Directory for wider collaboration

The Prompt Directory has the potential to become a shared resource for schools beyond Wishford. Opening it to other schools would allow teachers to exchange effective prompts and contribute to a broader community of practice.

Open-sourcing selected tools

There is an opportunity to open-source the Option Columns software and potentially other tools. This would allow other schools to benefit from the Centre's work, while also strengthening Wishford's position as a collaborative and credible contributor to the sector.

Award Recognition

The Centre will pursue recognition through relevant awards. Awards submissions will provide an opportunity to reflect on impact, gather evidence and raise the profile of the work being done.

Testing and implementation of tools

The next stage for several tools will be testing and implementation, both within the group and with external partners. This will help move projects from prototype to practical use, generating evidence of impact and informing future development.

Booking AI x EI 2027

The success of the first AI x EI Conference provides a strong basis for a second event. The aim will be to build on the first year, increase reach and further establish the conference as an important annual gathering.

Publishing the second edition of the Journal

The second edition of the Wishford Journal of Innovation in Education is planned for December 2026. This will provide another opportunity to bring together thoughtful writing on the future of education and deepen the Centre's intellectual contribution to the sector.

Produce further open-access CPD Resources

The Centre plans to develop multiple courses for pupils and staff, including **Vibe-Coding for Teachers**, helping teachers understand and use AI-assisted coding. This could help staff create small tools, automate workflows and develop greater confidence in shaping technology for their own educational contexts.

CLOSING STATEMENT

The first year of the Wishford Centre for Innovation has been ambitious, practical and outward-looking. In a short period of time, the Centre has launched a major conference, published a journal, developed a suite of software tools, delivered training across the group and begun to influence wider conversations about the future of education.

This work reflects a clear belief: schools should not be passive recipients of technological change. They should shape it.

For Wishford Education, the Centre provides a way to explore the future with confidence, creativity and care. For the wider sector, it offers a model of innovation that is practical rather than speculative, ethical rather than reckless, and deeply rooted in the human purposes of education.

The coming year will focus on implementation, collaboration and evidence of impact. The foundations have been laid. The next stage is to turn promising ideas into sustained practice, and to continue building the Wishford Centre for Innovation as a distinctive and respected voice in education.